

SFU

MORRIS J. WOSK  
CENTRE FOR DIALOGUE

# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT





**Date Published: May 1, 2019**  
**ISBN: 978-1-77287-061-9**

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#### **Citation Guide**

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#### **About the SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue**

Simon Fraser University's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue fosters shared understanding and positive action through dialogue and engagement. As a trusted convener and hub for community initiatives, we have engaged hundreds of thousands of participants to create solutions for many of society's most pressing issues, and actively support student learning through experiential education opportunities.

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# ABOUT THIS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed to support high-quality public engagement by governments and institutions, and the implementation of Public Engagement Strategies.

The toolkit was originally developed by the City of New Westminster Mayor's Task Force on Public Engagement with support from SFU's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue. The toolkit was then adapted for a broader audience.

At the core of the toolkit is a commitment to enacting a set of five principles for collaborative public engagement, which are described in more depth on the next page:

- Work in partnership with communities
- Include participants reflecting the full diversity of interests and perspectives
- Create conditions for actionable public judgment.
- Increase shared understanding
- Commit to transparency about purposes, methods & outcomes

The toolkit consists of a strategic framework as well as concrete steps to plan engagement initiatives. Staff responsible for planning and delivering engagement processes and events can use the six strategic considerations included in the framework to clarify key sponsorship questions with decision-makers and senior staff. The six planning steps, as well as the worksheets and resources included in the Appendix, provide guidance for preparing and carrying out engagement initiatives.





# PRINCIPLES FOR COLLABORATIVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



### Work in partnership with communities

**The key to building an ongoing culture of participation with a diverse citizenry is to consider each interaction as an opportunity to build relationships and partnerships toward shared goals.** Where possible, collaborative public engagement seeks to connect with community members and organizations to name and frame issues meaningfully, understand potential impacts and alleviate power imbalances through participatory decision-making. Within any public engagement initiative, there should be a clear commitment to build the capacity of affected communities and incorporate their contributions into decisions.

### Include participants reflecting the full diversity of interests and perspectives

**Legitimate engagement outcomes depend on input beyond “the usual suspects” and require a concerted effort to seek out missing voices and frame issues in ways that are relevant to everyday lived experiences.** Marginalized or traditionally under-served communities must be consulted regarding issues of safety, power dynamics and accessibility in order to address barriers to participation. It is important to dedicate sufficient time and resources towards building trusting relationships with communities. Creating safe spaces for inclusion also requires cultural safety, humility and a human rights approach.

### Create conditions for actionable public judgement

**Given appropriate information and structure, a citizenry has enormous capacity to deliberate and provide relevant and strategic policy advice.** Collaborative public engagement calls upon specialists to frame trade-offs for participants to consider in relation to their values, interests and experiences. Collaborative public engagement should provide deliberatively framed materials presenting evidence-based information to enable participants to move beyond generalizations, be more inquisitive and weigh trade-offs with more awareness. Any collaborative engagement process should contribute to enhancing the knowledge of participants as well as leaving them with a sense of empowerment.

### Increase shared understanding

**Some of the most powerful forms of public engagement use professionally facilitated small-group discussion formats that embrace a multitude of learning and communication styles.** Dialogue is an excellent mechanism for participants to listen deeply, humanize opposing perspectives, mediate differences and build community resiliency through improved relationships. Storytelling enabled by dialogue processes can also be a powerful tool to build empathy across differences and come to shared understanding.

### Commit to transparency about purposes, methods and outcomes

**One of the largest barriers to public participation is the belief by citizens that their input will have no impact on decisions.** Combating this trust deficit requires decision-makers to communicate the purposes and limitations of the engagement honestly, account for how they used the expertise of those with lived-experiences in combination with that of experts and other stakeholders, report back on engagement outcomes, and identify opportunities for further involvement. There should be a commitment to respond to participant recommendations or input and an opportunity for participants to evaluate these responses.



# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

## Six considerations for sponsoring your next public engagement initiative

### What is the topic of engagement?

- Why do we need to engage?
- What questions does the public want to address?
- What is on or off the table?
- What are the risks of not engaging?
- What criteria will we use to make a decision?

### What are we trying to achieve?

- Raising awareness & education
- Transforming conflicts
- Exploring ideas & information
- Contributing to decision-making
- Mobilizing collective action

Adapted from NCDD Streams of Engagement:  
ncdd.org

### How will our decisions affect communities?

- Who is affected?
- What is the degree of impact for each group?

Adapted from SPARC BC Community Engagement Toolkit: [sparc.bc.ca](http://sparc.bc.ca)

## What level of engagement are we promising the public? (IAP2)

### INFORM

We will keep you informed.

### CONSULT

We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.

### INVOLVE

We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

### COLLABORATE

We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.

### EMPOWER

We will implement what you decide.



### What is the reach of this engagement initiative?

- How far and wide should the reach of engagement be?
- What are the budget and timeline for engagement?

### How will we follow through?

- How will we report back on what we heard and how the public's input was used in making a decision?
- How will we evaluate the engagement and report on the results of the evaluation?

This section provides a framework to clarify the purpose and scale of engagement initiatives. The framework consists of six strategic considerations that ensure that public engagement meets the needs of decision-makers, staff and the public:

- 01. What question(s) are we asking the public?**
- 02. What are we trying to achieve?**
- 03. How will our decisions impact communities?**
- 04. How will the community's input affect decisions?**
- 05. What is the scale of engagement?**
- 06. How will we follow through?**

The framework leverages some of the most commonly used approaches developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation (NCDD), and the Social Planning and Research Council of British Columbia (SPARC BC). These key considerations will help to inform the selection of appropriate engagement tools and methods.

While the framework helps structure the planning of public engagement processes, it is not intended to serve as a step-by-step, "cookbook." As the planning of an engagement initiative progresses, it is important to periodically revisit these six considerations to ensure the engagement plan continues to meet the needs of the intended public, staff and decision-makers.



# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SCENARIO 1:

## CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE AND SAFETY IN THE CITY



After an extensive public engagement process, the City is rolling out upgrades to its cycling infrastructure, including new separated bike lanes as part of its efforts to increase active transportation. Council has requested staff to develop an information and education campaign to ensure smooth implementation and increase traffic safety.

Staff delivered a campaign that included an interactive website with FAQs on new infrastructure, traffic rules, safety tips and a story-book with user experiences from this city and others. The City partnered with a cycling advocacy group to host training sessions in schools, workplaces and at community events.

### Strategic Considerations Summary:

TOPIC	Cycling infrastructure upgrades and safety
OUTCOMES	Raising awareness and education/mobilizing collaborative action
COMMUNITY IMPACTS	Modest community-wide impact
COMMITMENT TO THE PUBLIC	Inform: "We will keep you informed"
SCALE OF ENGAGEMENT	Medium to broad (extensive online engagement) due to community-wide impact
FOLLOW-THROUGH	Consider ways to keep people engaged in a conversation about traffic safety and the role of bicycle infrastructure

Note: this is a hypothetical scenario and does not refer to current or planned engagement initiatives/topics.



### 01. What makes a good question?

Determining the right question(s) to ask the community is fundamental for choosing the appropriate engagement process and setting it up for success. A question that is too narrow will limit the public's input and creativity in helping address the issue, and can easily feel like window dressing. For example, if the City plans a new park and only asks the public where to put the playground this may be a lost opportunity for public engagement.

When asking an open question, on the other hand, it is important that the engagement process produces actionable information. Asking residents how they envision their new park, for example, offers a great opportunity for engagement, but to generate useful discussions and feedback, it may have to be broken down into questions like: what should the park look like? Who will use it? What services should it provide? And what facilities might it include?

### 02. What is the opportunity for engagement?

The public makes unique contributions to planning and decision-making at City Hall that complement those of elected officials, staff, experts and stakeholder groups. The topic(s) of engagement and associated questions should reflect the contributions that the City is hoping for and the opportunity this represents for improving decision-making and planning. Example questions to help clarify the roles of different actors include:

- Where is community participation needed to define the challenge, develop and evaluate solutions and/or enable successful implementation?
- Where do we need to hear from a broad, diverse audience, including all those affected by decisions?
- Where can the community's input help to prioritize and balance competing needs and interests?
- Where will tapping into the community's collective intelligence allow the City to learn and innovate?

#### **Corporate Standard:**

The public is informed about the intended outcomes of public engagement initiatives, including how their input will be used to affect decision-making.



### 03. What is on or off the table?

A Public Engagement Strategy aims to maximize opportunities for the public to get involved. Choosing a question for public engagement, however, not only requires defining what is up for discussion—but also what isn't. There are a number of factors that can limit what is on the table, and it is critical to be transparent about such limitations at the outset of an engagement process. Such factors can include:

- What fiduciary duties do elected officials have to fulfill regarding this topic?
- How do existing priorities, plans, policies and bylaws affect the decision?
- How do other legal and institutional frameworks affect the decision?
- What parts of the question must be answered by subject matter experts?
- What resources are available to implement solutions?
- What political realities must be considered?
- How comfortable are decision-makers with ambiguity?

### 04. What are the risks of not engaging (more deeply)?

Every engagement initiative faces constraints—and it is easy to place too many limitations on the process or define questions too narrowly when focusing on such constraints. There are significant risks associated with not engaging the public more deeply in decision-making. A lack of engagement with those who are—directly or indirectly—affected by decisions can mean that their interests are not adequately considered. Other risks include escalating conflicts, loss of trust, delays in decision-making and higher costs for implementation. Insufficient engagement often means that decisions need to be revisited and revised after the fact, and can result in missed opportunities for innovation and collective action.



Thinking carefully and early in the design process about what an engagement initiative should achieve is critical for success. With expected outcomes clearly defined, decision-makers and staff at City Hall will know that the initiative will be useful for their work, and community members will know what they are contributing to.

Most public engagement initiatives are designed to produce outcomes that fall within the five categories listed below. Many initiatives will deliver more than one of these outcomes: for example, all engagement processes should include ways of raising awareness and education. The categories described below are adapted the NCDD Streams of Practice, which provide corresponding tools and methods (see References and Appendix).

### Common Public Engagement Outcomes:

RAISING AWARENESS AND EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inform community members about municipal plans, policies, services and decisions and how the community will be affected</li><li>• Increase understanding of how decisions are made, including the scope and results of public engagement</li></ul>
EXPLORING IDEAS AND INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learn more about the identified topic(s), related issues and impacts</li><li>• Understand community perspectives, values and identities</li><li>• Generate ideas, chart the spectrum of possible solutions/responses</li></ul>
CONTRIBUTING TO DECISION-MAKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gather feedback and suggestions to improve existing plans, policies and solutions</li><li>• Develop and evaluate options and solutions</li><li>• Make recommendations to elected decision-makers</li></ul>
TRANSFORMING CONFLICTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish or improve relationships between participants, stakeholders, or between the City and the community</li><li>• Surface community perspectives, values, and identities</li><li>• Find common ground for compromise and collaboration</li></ul>
MOBILIZING COLLABORATIVE ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Empower people and groups to solve complicated problems and take responsibility for the solution</li><li>• Enable collaboration between multiple public and private entities</li><li>• Mobilize community action to help implement solutions</li></ul>

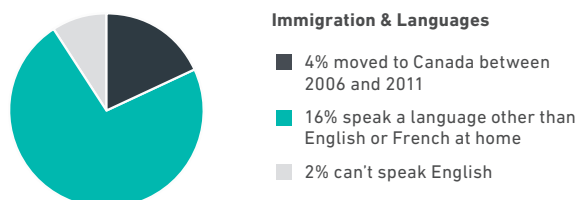
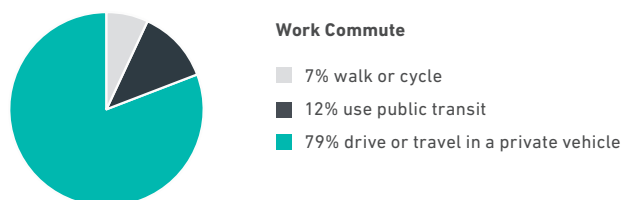
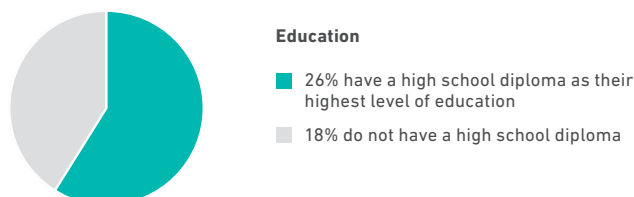
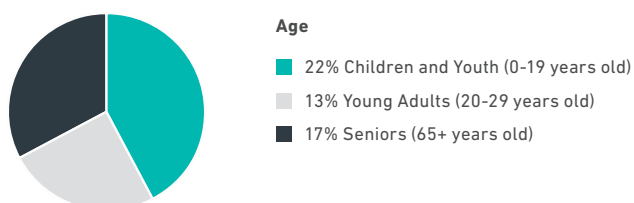
Choosing the appropriate level and kind of public engagement for any given topic must be based on an assessment of how actions and decisions will impact communities:

- What is the impact on the whole community?
- What is the impact on specific areas and/or groups within the community?

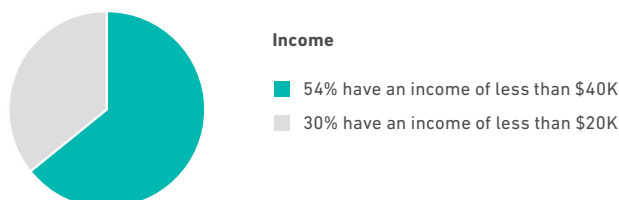
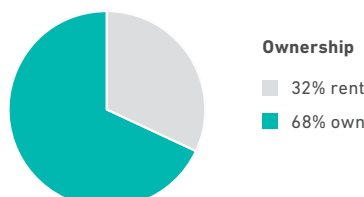
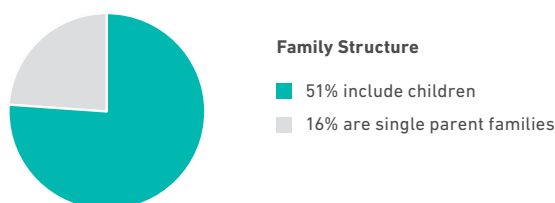
The higher the impact on the entire community, specific areas or community groups, the deeper the engagement that is required with those who are affected. This includes impacts on individuals who face barriers to participation and whose views are under-represented.

### Demographic Diversity in Canada (Some Statistics\*):

#### Among people living in Canada



#### Among households



The five most common languages other than English or French are:

- Mandarin
- Cantonese
- Panjabi (Punjabi)
- Spanish
- Tagalog (Pilipino, Filipino)

\*These statistics, drawn from the 2016 Canadian census, offer just one snapshot of the diversity found in many regions and municipalities.

### Who do we need to engage?

**Mapping specific stakeholder groups and communities of interest is best done along two dimensions:**

- the level of impact that the decisions/actions will have on these groups;
- the level of access these groups normally have to participating in decision-making (i.e. their level of organization, ability to access and use regular city processes like Council hearings, political/economic status and leverage, networks, etc.)

### Potential stakeholder groups or communities of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Ethno-cultural or religious groups
- Persons with dis/abilities
- Business owners, industries
- Labour organizations
- Seniors
- Low-income families
- New immigrants
- LGBTQQIA2S+ communities
- Renters
- Home owners
- Youth
- Women
- Indigenous Nations/Groups/Band Councils
- Homeless and vulnerably housed
- Advocacy groups
- Other levels of government
- Educational institutions





The sample matrix below shows how mapping stakeholder groups and communities of interest by level of impact and influence can help identify appropriate actions to involve these groups in the engagement process.


### Engagement Initiative Example:

Relocation of a Youth Centre

Stakeholder group/ community of interest	How will they be affected?	Level of impact	Level of influence	Actions to include group/community of interest
Current youth centre users	New location would create significant barriers for current users to access critical services	High	Low	Series of mall group dialogues with users at current site to surface barriers and ideas for mitigation
Other youth/potential users of new centre	Youth in other areas currently have limited access to critical services	High	Low	Collaboration with School District to run survey and focus groups in schools

### IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum

The IAP2 Federation has developed the Spectrum to help groups define the public's role in any public participation process. The IAP2 Spectrum is quickly becoming an international standard.

INCREASING IMPACT ON DECISION 					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.

### A Public Engagement Strategy strives to maximize the involvement of community members in decision-making.

In order to set realistic expectations and meet the needs of all parties involved, public engagement planning must also take into account technical and financial factors, including:

- When is the final decision needed?
- How much time will be required to achieve the identified public engagement outcomes?
- What financial and staff resources are available for the engagement process?
- How does the budget for the engagement process compare to the budget for implementing solutions and to the overall engagement efforts?

### What is the commitment to the public in this engagement initiative?

The IAP2 spectrum (see below) helps clarify how the results of an engagement initiative—such as survey data, feedback on proposals and plans, new ideas, options recommended by community members—will be used for making a decision. Any commitment to the public on the IAP2's spectrum can be achieved through a range of different methods. Polls, for example, can be used to educate the public about an issue and gather feedback, but they could also be used as a deliberative tool to let the public make a recommendation by majority vote. (See References and Appendix for further ideas for methods and tools).



### The scale of public engagement describes how broad the reach of the initiative and its outreach and communications activities are.

Public engagement process can be designed to target the entire community or only a specific neighbourhood or community of interest. To determine the right scale of engagement, it is important to consider the impacts of decisions on communities (see strategic consideration 3) as well as how the resources needed for an engagement process relate to the overall project budget. To illustrate this point: while adding a \$100,000 piece of infrastructure to a City park may affect many users, a large scale engagement process that would cost the City \$50,000 may seem inappropriate in this context.

#### **Corporate Standard:**

The scale of engagement should reflect the impact of decisions on communities, the opportunity for engagement, the cost of not engaging and the relationship to the overall project budget.





### Planning public engagement with a longer-term perspective is crucial for building lasting relationships with the public.

For a community member who has dedicated time and energy to participating in an engagement opportunity, there are few things more frustrating than not knowing how their impact was used. Reporting out on the engagement activities, the input gathered and how it influenced decisions is a fundamental part of good engagement practice.

Good follow through, however, goes beyond reporting. It is conscious effort to sustain and build deeper relationships with community members. This includes strategies to:

- Keep community members engaged on the topic, with the institution/government or with each other
- Involve community members in implementation or detailed design of decisions
- Establish mechanisms for reporting on the implementation and the impacts of decisions

#### **Corporate Standard:**

A summary of the public's input is compiled and released following each public engagement activity.

Participants and the public receive information on the results of engagement initiatives, how decisions were made and what role their input played.

# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SCENARIO 2:

## CANADA'S GENERATION ENERGY CONSULTATION



### The Federal Government has decided to consult broadly with Canadians to inform the development of a pan-Canadian energy policy.

The Government wants to know how Canadians want to meet Canada's climate goals, create jobs and keep energy affordable. Energy is a contentious issue in Canada, with various regional perspectives, challenges and opportunities. As part of a wider consultation effort, the Government has asked the staff at the Department of Natural Resources to design a process that would engage with a representative sample of citizens to help find common ground and identify options for policy changes that will be supported by the country. The Government made it clear that they were seeking non-binding recommendations from the public to inform the policy development process.

Staff designed a series of five regional dialogues of two and a half days held in different regions and one pan-Canadian dialogue of two days. At each session, participants had a chance to work together in small groups. Staff prepared an evidence-based discussion guide and a summary video outlining the purpose and context of the dialogues; information about energy systems in Canada and trends in energy systems around the world; and an overview of common perspectives on Canada's energy future and the potential positive and negative impacts of these diverse policy approaches. The guide also offered some discussion questions for participants to consider in preparation of the dialogues.

The dialogues contributed to depolarizing the conversation on energy and participants produced a series of robust principles and recommendations.

### Strategic Considerations Summary:

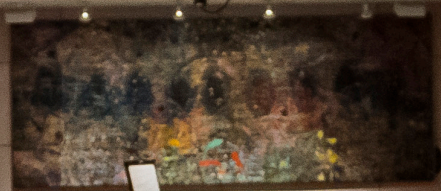
TOPIC:	What is Canada's Energy Future and how do Canadians want to meet Canada's climate goals, create jobs and keep energy affordable?
OUTCOMES:	Conflict transformations/contributing to decision-making
COMMUNITY IMPACTS:	High impact on Canadians
COMMITMENT TO THE PUBLIC:	Involve: "We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the decisions made."
SCALE OF ENGAGEMENT:	Over 380,000 people reached through multiple engagements both online and in person. 150 participants engaged through the Citizens' Dialogues on Canada's Energy Future.
FOLLOW THROUGH:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reporting on engagement outcomes</li><li>• Consider mechanism to assess and report back on updates to energy policy development at regular intervals</li></ul>





EXIT

EXIT



KERA  
MCARTHUR



# PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

This section provides practical guidance for staff involved in planning and implementing public engagement initiatives, including guidance for selecting tools and methods after answering the questions posed by the institution's strategic framework. This guidance is organized into six practical steps for successful engagement planning. The Appendix includes detailed worksheets and resources for each of the six steps.

### Step 1: Identifying Internal Stakeholders

- Who needs to be involved in designing and delivering this initiative?
- Who has authority over what decisions?
- Who will mediate conflicting needs and interests between departments

#### **Corporate Standard:**

Staff identify and involve internal stakeholders early in the planning of public engagement initiatives, including stakeholders who can mediate conflicting needs and interests.

#### **Scenario:**

To plan the engagement process for the Generation Energy Consultation (see scenario 2 on p. 23), the project lead from NRCan involved staff from across its divisions from the start of the process. While decision-making on the engagement process resided with the NRCan project lead as well as an external professional third-party facilitator in this project, staff and outside experts were critical for identifying and gathering information to be included in a backgrounder document for participants.



### Step 2: Planning for Evaluation

- What are we trying to achieve by engaging the public and what are useful indicators for measuring success?
- What information/data do we need to collect and when?
- At what points along the way do we check whether we are on track and, if necessary, how to adjust?

#### **Corporate Standard:**

Engagement initiatives integrate evaluation tools beginning in the early planning stages, using public engagement principles as a basis for evaluation.

#### **Scenario:**

The City launched an information campaign on cycling infrastructure to increase use and raise safety awareness (see scenario 1 on p. 11). Staff responsible for the campaign identified as criteria for success that the campaign should reach at least 1,500 individuals, 200 of them in person. At least 15% of the people engaged in person should be individuals with a primary transportation other than cycling. To capture data, staff encouraged participants to pre-register for in-person events and asked them fill out a brief exit survey. See p. 41 for worksheets and resources on planning step 2.

### Step 3: Planning for Inclusion and Accessibility

- What will make this public engagement initiative accessible and welcoming to a broad diversity of community members and to identified communities of interests?
- What barriers to participation do communities of interests and stakeholders face and what can we do to reduce those barriers?
- How can we meet communities of interests “where they already are”?

#### **Corporate Standard:**

Venues, language and communications channels are assessed for their accessibility when planning public engagement initiatives. Planning for public engagement initiatives includes concrete and inclusive steps to mitigate barriers to participation.

Participants are offered multiple channels and formats to engage for different abilities and learning styles.

#### **Scenario:**

As part of the planning for the City’s cycling infrastructure and safety information campaign (see scenario 1 on p. 11), staff identified two non-cycling groups who either faced barriers or were expected to be hard to reach: seniors and car-drivers. Staff met with Seniors advocacy groups to plan activities that would be accessible to seniors, such as an information session at Century House with a mock set-up of pedestrian crossings at new bike lanes. Staff further worked with community volunteers to hand out info pamphlets and free coffee to drivers who dropped off their children at New Westminster Schools. See p. 42 – 44 for worksheets and resources on planning step 3.

### Step 4: Choosing Engagement Methods and Tools

- What methods and tools (in what sequence) will produce the intended outcomes?
- What methods and tools will best maximize community members’ time and contributions?
- How will participants interact with each other and with decisions-makers?
- Which different channels for participation do we need to offer to make participation accessible to a broad audience and to all communities of interests? (e.g. in-person meetings, online tools, paper surveys, etc.)

#### **Corporate Standard:**

Engagement initiatives apply innovative methods and technologies.

#### **Scenario:**

Instead of traditional open houses, staff organized deliberative citizens’ dialogues (see scenario 2 on p. 23) where participants were able to interact in small groups. Multiple activities allowed the participants to learn more about Canada’s energy systems and weigh trade-offs for policy options. The video allowed participants to interact with information and a presentation and game allowed them to explore how they relate to energy and ask questions to gain a shared understanding of the issue. See p. 45 for worksheets and resources on planning step 4.



### Step 5: Planning Communications

- Who are key target audiences to engage in this initiative?
- What communications channels will reach which audiences?
- How will we communicate results and support relationship-building with participants?

#### **Corporate Standard:**

Community members are notified of engagement opportunities well in advance (at least three weeks for in-person events.) All public engagement initiatives include a plan for communicating results to participants and the general public.

#### **Scenario:**

Staff worked with a polling firm to identify and invite a representative sample of Canadians to take part in the dialogues. All participants received information packages in advance and had extensive communication with the engagement team to ensure they had all their needs met and their questions answered.

The participants in the Pan-Canadian dialogue presented their final recommendations and principles to a large group of stakeholder and other groups at the Generation Energy Forum, as well as to elected officials and media. A video was made of the engagement process and shared widely.

After the dialogues, all participants received a “Thank You” email from the Minister of Natural Resources, outlining the next steps in the process. All participants received a summary of their recommendations after the dialogues. See p. 46 for worksheets and resources on planning step 5.

### Step 6: Providing Information

- What information do community members need to participate effectively?
- How can we provide this information in an accessible way that gives participants sufficient time for review?
- Who will be available to answer questions from participants?

#### **Corporate Standard:**

Community members have access to the information necessary for meaningful participation.

Information is provided in simple language and with adequate time to process.

#### **Scenario:**

The Citizens' Dialogues on Canada's Energy Future (see scenario 2 on p. 23) provided participants with information on key issues, such as factual information about energy systems in Canada, an overview of common perspectives on Canada's energy future, along with evidence-based information about the potential positive and negative impacts of these diverse policy approaches and trends in energy systems around the world. The information was presented in text, graphics and images as well as through a summary video that staff had reviewed with a peer-review group of experts and key stakeholders. At the in-person events, a team reviewed the information with the participants, took note of the questions they could not answer and researched the answers to provide them the next day. See p. 47 – 48 for worksheets and resources on planning step 6.

The Appendix provides a series of worksheets that are tailored to assist staff in following the strategic considerations and planning steps discussed above. In addition, the documents listed below include further tools and methods corresponding with the considerations in the strategic framework and planning steps.

### IAP2 Public Participation Toolbox:

Includes description of techniques to facilitate different levels of public impact on decision-making.

[http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/imported/06Dec\\_Toolbox.pdf](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/imported/06Dec_Toolbox.pdf)

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### NCDD Resource Guide on Public Engagement:

Includes collection of process methods designed to facilitate engagement outcomes such as exploring ideas and information, supporting decision-making, transforming conflicts and mobilizing collaborative action.

[http://www.ncdd.org/files/NCDD2010\\_Resource\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.ncdd.org/files/NCDD2010_Resource_Guide.pdf)

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### SPARC BC Community Engagement Toolkit:

Includes matrix of engagement tools recommended depending on the impact that decisions will have on communities.

[www.sparc.bc.ca/component/rubberdoc/doc/534/community-engagement-toolkit.pdf](http://www.sparc.bc.ca/component/rubberdoc/doc/534/community-engagement-toolkit.pdf)

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### NCDD Best-of-the-Best Resources:

A rich list of tools, guides and books with practical advice on dialogue, deliberation and public engagement.

<http://ncdd.org/rc/best-of-the-best-resources>

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### City of New Westminster Seniors Engagement Toolkit:

Includes tools and worksheets to support engagement initiatives inclusive for seniors.

[https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/SET\\_Final\\_Report\\_May\\_2\\_2011.pdf](https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/SET_Final_Report_May_2_2011.pdf)

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In developing this Engagement Strategy, the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue has benefited from the following resources that provide further useful information on public engagement best practices.

David Meslin/TedX Toronto: **Redefining Apathy**  
<https://youtu.be/LuHNVYW4tW0>

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City of Edmonton Council Initiative on Public Engagement/Centre for Public Involvement (2016), **Strengthening Public Engagement in Edmonton**  
[http://www.edmonton.ca/city\\_government/documents/StrengtheningPublicEngagementinEdmonton\\_July2015.pdf](http://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/StrengtheningPublicEngagementinEdmonton_July2015.pdf)

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City of Victoria, **Foundations for Success: A Strategy to Improve Civic Engagement at the City of Victoria**,  
[http://www.victoria.ca/assets/Departments/Communications/Documents/Civic\\_Engagment.pdf](http://www.victoria.ca/assets/Departments/Communications/Documents/Civic_Engagment.pdf)

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International Association for Public Participation, **IAP2 Core Values of Public Participation**,  
<http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/imported/CoreValues.pdf>

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Monitor Institute/Rockefeller Foundation (2013), **Gather, The Art & Science of Effective Convening**,  
<https://assets.rockefellerfoundation.org/app/uploads/20130626174021/Gather-The-Art-and-Science-of-Effective-Conveing.pdf>

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Nabatchi, Tina and Leighninger, Matt (2015), **Public Participation for 21st Century Democracy** (Hoboken: Jossey-Bass).

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Township of Langley (2016), **Public Engagement Strategy for Planning and Development**, prepared by the Mayor's Standing Committee on Public Engagement with Support from Modus Planning, Design & Engagement Inc.,  
<http://www.tol.ca/Portals/0/FileShare/Council/2016-03-21%20Public%20Engagement%20Strategy%20complete%20with%20Implementation%20Plan.pdf>

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Vancouver Mayor's Engaged City Task Force (2014), **Final Report**,  
<http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/final-report-engaged-city-task-force-2014.pdf>

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# APPENDIX:

# WORKSHEETS AND RESOURCES

The following pages provide worksheets and resources supporting staff in working through the strategic considerations and planning steps for public engagement initiatives.



### **What is the opportunity for engagement?**

- Examples:**
- How will decision-making benefit from engagement?
  - How do existing priorities, plans, policies and bylaws affect the decision?
  - How do other legal and institutional frameworks affect the decision?
  - What do subject matter experts have to contribute?
  - What are the risks of engaging and not engaging?

### **What other information do elected officials and senior staff need?**

### **What are possible engagement questions?**

### What are possible engagement outcomes?



#### **Raising awareness and education**

*Notes/questions for implementation:*



#### **Exploring ideas and information**

*Notes/questions for implementation:*



#### **Contributing to decision-making**

*Notes/questions for implementation:*



**Transforming conflicts**

*Notes/questions for implementation:*



**Mobilizing collaborative action**

*Notes/questions for implementation:*

Engagement initiative:				
Stakeholder group/ community of interest	How will they be affected?	Level of impact	Level of influence	Actions to include group/community of interest



**What is our commitment to the public?**



**Inform**

*Notes/questions for implementation:*



**Consult**

*Notes/questions for implementation:*



**Involve**

*Notes/questions for implementation:*



**Collaborate**

*Notes/questions for implementation:*



**Empower**

*Notes/questions for implementation:*

Project	Impact	Scale of Engagement	Engagement Budget	Overall Budget/ Financial Implications
<b>Example:</b> OCP update on density*	High impact on local residents High community-wide impact	Broad reach (mail drop to all households, extensive online outreach) due to impact and financial and other implications for the City	~\$100K	>\$5M
<b>Example:</b> Cycling infrastructure and safety campaign*	Modest community-wide impact	Medium to broad (extensive online engagement) due to community-wide impact	~15K	\$1.5M (cost of updated cycling infrastructure)
<b>More Examples:</b>				

\* Hypothetical scenarios, see p. 11 and p. 23 for more context.

	Contents	Timing	Distribution Channels
<b>Example:</b> Early findings summary (2-pages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event summary</li> <li>• Major themes of public input</li> </ul>	2 weeks after event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email to all participants</li> <li>• City Website</li> </ul>
<b>Example:</b> Full engagement report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event summary</li> <li>• Major themes of public input</li> <li>• Detailed information about specific options discussed</li> <li>• Demographic breakdown of participants</li> <li>• Summary of engagement process</li> </ul>	1 month after event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email to all participants</li> <li>• City Website</li> <li>• Blog post</li> </ul>
<b>More Examples:</b>			

## Planning Step 1 – Worksheet: **WHO NEEDS TO BE INVOLVED IN DESIGNING AND DELIVERING THIS INITIATIVE?**

		Mayor and Council	Public Engagement Unit	Other City Departments
<b>Impact on entire community</b>	High / modest / low			
<b>Impact on specific stakeholder groups/ communities of interest</b>	High / modest / low			
<b>Visibility</b>	High / modest / low			
<b>Risk</b>	High / modest / low			

### What are possible engagement questions?

Who is the sponsor?

Who has authority over what decisions?

Who will mediate conflicting needs and interests between departments?



## Planning Step 2 – Evaluation Planning Worksheet and Examples: **WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE AND HOW DO WE MEASURE IT?**

Objective	Indicator	Data source	Time of Measurement
<b>Example:</b> Engagement involves participants from affected community of interest	Participation represents population shares	Participant surveys for in-person events and online surveys	During registration and after completion of project
	Attendance of focus group	Registration for focus group	During registration and after completion of project
<b>Example:</b> Information material is accessible to participants from affected community of interest	Input and feedback from experts/ community representatives	Meetings/interviews	Scoping interviews during planning stage
<b>More Examples:</b>			

## Planning Step 3 – Worksheet and Examples: WHAT CAN WE DO TO MAKE ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE?

Target Audiences	Potential Barriers	Actions
<b>Example:</b> Seniors	<b>Examples:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobility, visual and hearing challenges</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Marginalization in discussions dominated by other demographics</li> </ul>	<b>Examples:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wheel-chair accessible venues</li> <li>• Large-print materials</li> <li>• Room set up that reduces background noise, provides space to move, comfortable chairs in all parts of the room</li> <li>• Reimbursement for transportation (including cab rides)</li> <li>• Strong facilitation</li> <li>• Focus group in addition to general engagement opportunities</li> <li>• Engagement opportunities in venues that are familiar to and used by target group</li> <li>• Co-host/co-facilitate events with organizations/ individuals who identify with target group</li> </ul>
<b>Examples:</b> Homeless/ vulnerably housed	<b>Examples:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marginalization in public venues/at public events</li> <li>• Transportation</li> </ul>	<b>Examples:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-host/co-facilitate events with organizations/ individuals who identify with target group</li> <li>• Engagement opportunities in venues that are familiar to and used by target group</li> <li>• Reimbursement for transportation</li> </ul>
<b>Example:</b> People with low literacy skills	<b>Examples:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inaccessible information</li> <li>• Marginalization in public venues/at public events</li> </ul>	<b>Examples:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-host/co-facilitate events with organizations/ individuals who identify with target group</li> <li>• Information shared through visual and oral presentations</li> <li>• Engagement opportunities in venues that are familiar to and used by target group</li> <li>• Focus group in addition to general engagement opportunities</li> </ul>

## Planning Step 3 – Worksheet and Examples: WHAT CAN WE DO TO MAKE ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE?

Target Audiences	Potential Barriers	Actions
<b>Examples:</b>  People with mental health needs	<b>Examples:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of mental health support</li> <li>• Difficulties participating in activities/discussions</li> </ul>	<b>Examples:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-host/co-facilitate events with organizations/individuals who identify or who are trained and experienced in working with target group</li> <li>• Engagement opportunities in venues that are familiar to and used by target group</li> <li>• Mental health support</li> <li>• Focus group in addition to general engagement opportunities</li> <li>• Strong facilitation</li> </ul>
<b>Example:</b>  People who identify as trans-gender	<b>Examples:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marginalization in public venues/at public events</li> <li>• Inaccessible washrooms</li> <li>• Threats to personal safety</li> </ul>	<b>Examples:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-host/co-facilitate events with organizations/individuals who identify with target group</li> <li>• Engagement opportunities in venues that are familiar to and used by target group</li> <li>• Webcasting public events with opportunity to provide input online</li> <li>• Ensure gender-inclusive washrooms at public events</li> <li>• Focus group in addition to general engagement opportunities</li> </ul>

## Community contact points

There is a range of organizations that are active in different communities. Building relationships with such organizations is critical for involving diverse community members in City decision-making. These organizations include:

- Affordable Housing Societies
- Canadian Deafblind Association
- Community Services Societies
- Immigrant Services Society of BC
- Inclusion BC
- Family Services
- School Districts
- Seniors Services Societies
- Other non-profit community organizations

## Choosing the right venue

Good venues for public engagement are accessible for people with different abilities, needs, or culture. When trying to reach a specific audience, the best venues are that the target groups already frequent—and they don't have to have four walls. Possible venues include:

- Public Libraries
- Community Centres
- Educational Institutions
- Hotels and conventions centres
- Cultural spaces
- Place of worship
- Outdoor community events during the summer months



Outcomes	Ideas for methods and tools
<b>Raising awareness and education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feature stories: Focused stories on general project issues (IAP2, p. 2)</li> <li>• Responsive summaries: A form of documentation that “provides feedback to the public regarding comments received and how they are being incorporated” (IAP2, p. 5)</li> </ul>
<b>Exploring ideas and information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversation Café: public conversation hosted in a coffee shop, bookstore or similar venue (NCDD, p. 11)</li> <li>• Open Space Technology: facilitation technique with a “focus on self-organization that invites people to take responsibility for what they care about” (NCDD, p. 13)</li> <li>• Visioning workshops/Generative Dialogue: 1-hour focus groups to 3-hour workshops early in an engagement process that emphasizes the lived experiences, values and local expertise of participants rather than external technical knowledge or the needs of decision-makers.</li> </ul>
<b>Contributing to decision-making</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys, including online engagement tools (i.e. MetroQuest)</li> <li>• Visioning workshops/Generative Dialogue: (see Exploring ideas and information)</li> <li>• Deliberative Dialogue: half- to full-day events that provide space for participants who reflect the diversity of their community to study an issue at greater depth and make recommendations to City Council</li> </ul>
<b>Transforming conflicts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compassionate listening: process using “reflection and skilled inquiry to help speakers deepen their own understanding and awareness” (NCDD, p. 11)</li> <li>• Deliberative Dialogue: (See “Contributing to decision-making”)</li> </ul>
<b>Mobilizing collaborative action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future search: planning method that “enables large, diverse groups to validate a common vision, take responsibility for action and develop commitment to implementation [...] in uncertain, fast-changing situations” (NCDD, p. 11)</li> <li>• Charrettes: “collaborative and consensus-building design methodology that incorporates input from all stakeholders [...] in a continual ‘feedback-loop’ to prepare and refine a plan for development” (NCDD, p. 11)</li> </ul>



	Print ads	Posters	Website	Social Media	In-person/ Community Contact Points
Audience 1		✓	✓		✓
Audience 2		✓		✓	
Audience 3	✓			✓	✓

Planning Step 6 – Worksheet: **WHAT INFORMATION DO COMMUNITY MEMBERS NEED IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE EFFECTIVELY?**

Topic	Details	Sources
<b>Technical information</b>	What technical facts need to be taken into account?	
<b>Financial information</b>	What funding sources are available? How does this issue affect other funding decisions?	
<b>Policy context</b>	What other plans and policies impact this issue?	
<b>Potential options/solutions</b>	What options/solutions have been considered so far?	
<b>Previous engagement processes and results</b>	How has the community been engaged so far? What are the results of previous engagement events?	

Communicating information clearly using common language and visuals is key to successful engagement. The City of Toronto has recently changed its public notice template for development applications, inspired by public engagement thought leader David Meslin.

For further examples of “dazzling” public notices, see <http://www.dazzleawards.ca/>









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